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FM AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7753
INFO RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RUEHTA/AMEMBASSY ALMATY IMMEDIATE 5439
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING IMMEDIATE 0436
RUEHEK/AMEMBASSY BISHKEK IMMEDIATE 2862
RUEHDBU/AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE IMMEDIATE 0028
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE 2939
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE 0326
RUEHNT/AMEMBASSY TASHKENT IMMEDIATE 4973
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 0388
RUEHUNV/USMISSION UNVIE VIENNA IMMEDIATE 0030
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA IMMEDIATE 1191
RHMFISS/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC//DHO-2/REA/NMJIC-J2// PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC//J5/RUE// PRIORITY
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ASHGABAT 000930

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DEPT FOR ISN/MNSA, SCA/CEN (PERRY)

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/01/2016

TAGS: [MARR](#) [KNNP](#) [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [UN](#) [KZ](#) [TX](#)

SUBJECT: KAZAKHSTANIS IN ASHGABAT SEND MIXED SIGNALS ON
TURKMENISTAN'S PARTICIPATION IN CENTRAL ASIAN NUCLEAR
WEAPONS FREE ZONE

REF: A. STATE 144180

[1](#)B. ALMATY 03076

[1](#)C. ASHGABAT 00906

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Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Jennifer L. Brush, for reasons 1.4 (b)
and (d).

Summary

[1](#)1. (C) Representatives of the Kazakhstani Embassy in Ashgabat gave mixed signals on Turkmenistan's readiness to sign a Central Asian Nuclear Weapons Free Zone (CANWFZ) agreement in Kazakhstan on September 8 (reftels). Kazakhstani DCM Askar Tazhibayev told Charge on August 31 that Foreign Minister Tokayev had not/not secured Turkmenistan's President Niyazov's agreement to sign the agreement during the former's August 30-31 visit to Ashgabat (more on the visit septel). During a September 1 meeting, Kazakhstani Ambassador Murat Atanov told Charge the Turkmenistan MFA had sent a diplomatic note on August 30 saying Turkmenistan's ambassador to Kazakhstan was authorized to sign the agreement. The U.K. and French Embassies in Ashgabat have not yet received instructions for the joint P-3 demarche on the CANWFZ, their respective chiefs of mission told Charge they would contact their capitals for instructions and we would plan to deliver the demarche to Turkmenistan's Foreign Minister Rashit Meredov on September [1](#)4. End Summary.

CANWFZ Not Discussed with the President

[1](#)2. (C) Though Kazakhstani Ambassador Atanov had earlier told Charge that urging Niyazov to agree to a CANWFZ was a centerpiece of his Foreign Minister's visit to Turkmenistan,

during a September 1 meeting, Atanov said the issue had not been discussed with the president. Instead, he said, Atanov had talked about CANWFZ with Meredov and, as if an afterthought, added, "and we also received a diplomatic note the day before yesterday authorizing Turkmenistan's ambassador to Kazakhstan to attend the ceremony and sign for Turkmenistan." Responding to Charge's obvious surprise at this news (Tashibayev was also in this meeting), Atanov said (disingenuously), "what's wrong, don't you support this agreement?" Following Charge's explanation of P-3 objections to the agreement, Atanov seemed confused and said he was not sure of the state of play of the CANWFZ after all, and could not confirm that the September 8 signing date was set.

13. (C) Adding even more to the confusion, Atanov told Charge that Niyazov had been adamant during his meeting with Tokayev that Turkmenistan's neutrality absolutely prevented it from participating in any kind of regional agreement. "We will only operate on a bilateral basis," Niyazov told Tokayev, according to Atanov.

14. (C) The source of Charge's surprise was Atanov's DCM, Tashibayev, who assured her at Kyrgyzstani national day on August 31 that Niyavov had "not answered" Tokayev's request that Turkmenistan sign on to a CANWFZ. Accompanying Charge out the door on September 1, Tashibayev apologized and said his ambassador had not shown him the diplomatic note, which was why he had earlier told Charge there still was no answer.

P-3

15. (C) Charge called UK Ambassador Butcher following this meeting to say it looked as if Turkmenistan had agreed to sign and to see if he had received his instructions for the

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P-3 joint demarche. Butcher said he would call London, inform his French colleague, and that we should try to meet with Foreign Minister Meredov on September 4.

Comment

16. (C) The Kazakhstani Embassy is either intentionally obfuscating or is confused or both. On the other hand, it is not beyond the Government of Turkmenistan to commit to an agreement and then not follow through. Turkmenistan's history of regional non-cooperation certainly is stronger than its history of cooperation. We will see what Meredov says. End Comment.
BRUSH